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FM AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3054  
INFO RUEHZG/NATO EU COLLECTIVE  
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL 0067  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L STOCKHOLM 000029

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/11/2017  
TAGS: PREL MOPS PGOV SW  
SUBJECT: URGING SWEDEN TO DO MORE IN AFGHANISTAN

REF: A. US MISSION USNATO 610  
    1B. IIR 6 892 0082 08 (STOCKHOLM DAO IIR DTG 091440Z  
    JAN 08)

Classified By: Charge d'affaires a.i. Robert Silverman for reasons 1.4  
(b) and (d).

Summary

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11. (C) We should ask Sweden to plus up its ISAF operation in Afghanistan with additional manpower and resources, possibly including medevac helicopters, JAS Gripen fighters, and Operational Mentor and Liaison (OMLT) teams. Timing and developments affecting other international deployments may make this a good moment to ask for Afghanistan, though FM Bildt may want some additional assets for the EU's proposed ESDP mission to Chad. Sweden has legislative authorization for more troops in Afghanistan, and it might be able to find them -- but high-level requests and a formal demarche are needed. End Summary.

Doing More in Afghanistan

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12. (C) Sweden makes a substantial contribution to ISAF efforts in Afghanistan, leading the PRT in Mazar-e-Sharif with 365 Swedish troops. Noting shortfalls in ISAF contributions from NATO allies (ref A), we should ask the Swedes, the leading NATO Partner for Cooperation, what additional contributions they may be able make in Afghanistan.

13. (C) Sweden's government has signaled an intent to increase its international deployments. In addition to its troops in Afghanistan, Sweden has 358 troops under NATO command in Kosovo, and heads the EU's Nordic Battle Group (NBG) that includes 2,800 troops, of which 2,300 are Swedes. Swedish NBG troops are committed through June 30, 2008; following that period, many of them are earmarked to rotate as replacements into Kosovo or Afghanistan. In March 2006, the Parliament increased Sweden's authorized troop strength in Afghanistan, explaining the move as necessary to ensure the possibility of overlap during rotations, and to give flexibility to respond to new circumstances.

14. (C) Sweden announced January 9 it was withdrawing its offer to send to send 200 troops to UNAMID in Darfur as part of a joint Swedish/Norwegian engineering unit. Sweden also has 200 troops pledged to the EU's long-postponed ESDP Peace Keeping Operation in Chad and the Central African Republic. The cancellation of the UNAMID deployment may free up Swedish resources that could be directed to Afghanistan. Separately, we are hearing that FM Bildt may want the freed up Darfur forces added to the proposed Swedish contingent for Chad.

15. (C) Sweden has other potential assets for Afghanistan:

-- Newly acquired HKP 10 Super Puma Medevac Helicopter that could possibly be deployed in Afghanistan after June 30, when the NBG completes its commitment.

-- JAS Gripen fighters. Sweden's Armed Forces has publicly suggested sending JAS Gripen fighter aircraft to Afghanistan.

The Swedish military lobbied for the deployment, arguing that possible combat experience would be good for the Air Force -- and enhance the marketability of the Gripen.

-- Military advisers who could possibly relieve U.S. personnel on OMLT teams working with Afghan forces in ISAF Regional Command North.

¶6. (C) Comment and action request: Sweden has the legislative authority and appears to have the resources to make additional contributions in Afghanistan. By current legislation, any additions would be limited to the northern Mazar-e-Sharif PRT area. Post would appreciate receiving guidance to use with the Swedish government.

SILVERMAN